Order for the Blessing of a Victim of Crime or Oppression

Introduction

430 The personal experience of a crime, political oppression, or social oppression can be traumatic and not easily forgotten. A victim often needs the assistance of others, and no less that of God, in dealing with this experience.

431 This blessing is intended to assist the victim and help him or her come to a state of tranquility and place.

432 These orders may be used by a priest or a deacon, and also by a layperson, who follows the rites and prayers designated for a lay minister.

Order of Blessing

Introductory Rites

433 When the community has gathered, a suitable song may be sung. After the singing, the minister says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All make the sign of the cross and reply:

Amen.

434 A minister who is a priest or deacon greets those present in the following or other suitable words, taken mainly from sacred Scripture.

May the grace and peace of Christ be with you.

And all reply:

And with your spirit.

435 A lay minister greets those present in the following words:

May the Lord grant us peace, now and for ever.

R. Amen.

436 In the following or similar words, the minister prepares those present for the blessing.

Throughout history God has manifested his love and care for those who have suffered from violence, hatred, and oppression. We commend N. to the healing mercy of God who binds up all our wounds and enfolds us in his gentle care.

Reading of the Word of God

437 A reader, another person present, or the minister reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, listen to the words of the holy gospel according to Matthew:

10:28-33

Do not fear.

Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge. Even all the hairs of your head are counted. So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father. But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly Father."

438 Or:
Isaiah 59:6b-8, 15-18-The Lord is appalled by evil and injustice.

Job 3:1-26-Lamentation of Job.

Lamentations 3:1-24-I am one who knows affliction.

Lamentations 3:49-59-When I called, you came to my aid.

Micah 4:1-4-Every person shall sit undisturbed.

Matthew 5:1-10-The beatitudes.

Matthew 5:43-48-Love your enemies, pray for those who persecute you.

Luke 10:25-37-The good Samaritan.

439 As circumstances suggest, one of the following responsorial psalms may be sung, or some other suitable song.

R. The Lord is my strength and my salvation.

Psalm 140

Deliver me, O LORD, from evil men;
preserve me from violent men,
From those who devise evil in their hearts,
and stir up wars every day. R.

Save me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked;
preserve me from violent men
Who plan to trip up my feet-
the proud who have hidden a trap for me;
They have spread cords for a net;
by the wayside they have laid snares for me. R.

Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked;
further not their plans.
Those who surround me lift up their heads;
may the mischief which they threaten overwhelm them. R.

I know that the LORD renders

justice to the afflicted, judgment to the poor.
Surely the just shall give thanks to your name;
the upright shall dwell in your presence. R.

Psalm 142:2-3, 4b-5, 6-7

R. (v. 6) You, O Lord, are my refuge.

Psalm 31:2-3a, 4-5, 15-16, 24-25

R. (v. 6) Into your hands I commend my spirit.

440 As circumstances suggest, the minister may give those present a brief explanation of the biblical text, so that they may understand through faith the meaning of the celebration.

Intercessions

441 The intercessions are then said. The minister introduces them and an assisting minister or one of those present announces the intentions. From the following those best suited to the occasion may be used or adapted, or other intentions that apply to the particular circumstances may be composed.

The minister says:

Let us pray to the Lord God, the defender of the weak and powerless, who delivered our ancestors from harm.

R. Deliver us from evil, 0 Lord.

Assisting minister:

For N., that he/she may be freed from pain and fear, we pray to the Lord. R.

Assisting minister:

For all who are victims of crime/oppression, we pray to the Lord. R.

Assisting minister:

For an end to all acts of violence and hatred, we pray to the Lord. R.

Assisting minister:

For those who harm others, that they may change their lives and turn to God, we pray to the Lord. R.

442 After the intercessions the minister, in the following or similar words, invites all present to sing or say the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord heals our wounds and strengthens us in our weakness; let us pray as Christ has taught us:

All:

Our Father . . .

Prayer of Blessing

443 A minister who is a priest or deacon says the prayer of blessing with hands outstretched over the person to be blessed; a lay minister says the prayer with hands joined.

Lord God, your own Son was delivered into the hands of the wicked, yet he prayed for his persecutors and overcame hatred with the blood of the cross. Relieve the suffering of N.; grant him/her peace of mind and a renewed faith in your protection and care.

Protect us all from the violence of others, keep us safe from the weapons of hate, and restore to us tranquility and peace.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

As circumstances suggest, the minister in silence may sprinkle the person with holy water.

Concluding Rite

444 A minister who is a priest or deacon concludes the rite by saying:

May God bless you with his mercy, strengthen you with his love, and enable you to walk in charity and peace.

R. Amen.

Then he blesses all present.

And may almighty God bless you all, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

R. Amen.

445 A lay minister concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

May God bless us with his mercy, strengthen us with his love, and enable us to walk in charity and peace.

R. Amen.